

Message Text

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16

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NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 IO-14

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7503

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SUBJ: KHARTOUM UNIVERSITY SIT-DOWN LIFTED

REF: KHARTOUM 2719

1. SUMMARY: KHARTOUM UNIVERSITY (KU) STUDENTS ENDED SITDOWN STRIKE EARLY MORNING DEC 14 IN RETURN FOR KU ADMINISTRATION WILLINGNESS WORK WITH STUDENT UNION WITH DETAILS ITS OPERATIONS AND GENERAL RULES OF STUDENT CONDUCT TO BE WORKED OUT BY MUTUAL AGREEMENT. STUDENTS CLAIMING VICTORY, BUT GOVERNMENT AND KU ADMINISTRATION APPEAR MORE DESERVING OF KUDOS. END SUMMARY.

2. KHARTOUM UNIVERSITY (KU) STUDENTS LIFTED SIT-DOWN STRIKE IN EARLY MORNING HOURS DEC 14 ON BASIS OF AGREEMENT REACHED WITH KU AUTHORITIES. AS WE UNDERSTAND IT, AGREEMENT, WHICH WAS APPROVED BY VICE PRESIDENT BAGHIR EVENING DEC 13, IS SUFFICIENTLY VAGUE TO ALLOW VARYING INTERPRETATIONS AND SAVING OF FACE BY ALL PARTIES. IN GENERAL, HOWEVER, FINAL TERMS ARE CLOSE TO THOSE CITED REFTEL: (A) POLICE CORDON WAS FIRST REMOVED FROM AROUND KU; (B) STUDENTS THEN ENDED SIT-DOWN AND AGREED RETURN TO CLASSES ON SAT DEC 15 (VISIT TO CAMPUS THIS MORNING INDICATES SITUATION HAS INDEED RETURNED TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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NORMAL); (C) KU AUTHORITIES AGREED WORK WITH STUDENT

UNION; (D) BOTH SIDES AGREED STUDENT UNION AND GENERAL CONDUCT OF STUDENTS WITHIN CAMPUS TO BE SUBJECT TO DEFINITE AND AGREED GUIDELINES WITH REACTIVATION OF UNION THEREFORE DEPENDENT ON ACHIEVING SUCH ACCORD; AND (E) STUDENTS WERE REMINDED THEY HAD NO BUSINESS INVOLVING SELVES IN PURELY GOVERNMENT MATTER (E.G., PUBLIC SECURITY AND SENTENCING OFFENDERS). STUDENTS MADE GENERAL PLEDGE THAT UNIVERSITY LIFE WOULD NOT BE FURTHER DISRUPTED THIS YEAR, WHILE KU OFFICIAL MAINTAINED EARLIER POSITION THAT THEY UNABLE MAKE ANY COMMITMENTS REGARDING MATTERS INVOLVING GOS.

2. COMMENT: AS MIGHT BE EXPECTED STUDENTS ARE CLAIMING

THAT THEIR DEMANDS MET AND HENCE SIT-DOWN SUCCESSFUL. IN FACT, HOWEVER, GOS AND KU AUTHORITIES APPEAR TO BE CLEAR WINNERS. TACTICALLY, BY MAINTAINING RESTRAINED RESPONSE, LEAVING NEGOTIATIONS WITH STUDENTS IN HANDS OF KU ADMINISTRATION AND DENYING STUDENTS CONFRONTATION WHICH MANY OF THEM UNDOUBTEDLY HOPED FOR, G PROBABLY COULD NOT HAVE HANDLED SITUATION BETTER. AS FOR FUTURE, KU OFFICIALS FOR SHORT RUN HAVE STUDENT AGREEMENT TO AVOID FURTHER DISRUPTION. MORE IMPORTANT IN THE LONG RUN, WITH JOINT COMMITMENT TO WORK OUT SPECIFIC RULES FOR OPERATION STUDENT UNION AND OVERALL CAMPUS CONDUCT, THEY HAVE ALSO SUCCEEDED IN GETTING STUDENTS TO RECOGNIZE THAT SUBSTANTIAL DEGREE OF RESPONSIBILITY MUST ACCOMPANY MUCH DESIRED INTELLECTUAL FREEDOMS. MOREOVER, KEY ACTIVISTS RESPONSIBLE FOMENTING SIT-IN HAVE AGAIN GONE TO GROUND. WANTED BY POLICE SINCE SEPT DISTURBANCES, THEY WERE DISMISSED FROM KU BUT INFILTRATED CAMPUS IN NOV AND LED THE STRIKE. WHILE THEY HAVE BEEN PERMITTED DISAPPEAR RATHER THAN CAUGHT, WHICH WOULD HAVE REQUIRED POLICE INVASION CAMPUS, ARRANGEMENTS NOW RPT NOW CONTEMPLATED RE NEW STUDENT IDENTITY CARDS AND KU GUARDS ON GATES WHICH SHOULD PREVENT SIMILAR TROUBLE IN FUTURE. BREWER

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